Samskara (Karana) as a process, its types & effect on Dravya: Review

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INTRODUCTION

Ahara is the most important factor in life. Health as well as disease is dependent on various factors. According to Acharya Charaka, the body is supported by three sub-pillars known as Tri Upstambha (Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacarya). Ahara has been placed first in this statement, which shows that it is most important to maintain the life. Everyone desires a blanched diet. Ahara is responsible factor for human beings, in health and diseased state. Ahara is not only needed for the continuity of life, but also for Bala, Varna, Upacaya and longevity etc. In other medical sciences, food is considered important, but not the manner of eating and cooking. Ahara is a basic need for survival of life. For intake of Ahara, Ayurved has enlisted some special conditions which need to be followed to obtain complete benefits of the food. They are called as Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana. In which Karana is the processing of the substances which result in transformation of the inherent attributes in Dravya. In this article we will discuss the Samskara as a Karana among Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana for maintenance of healthy life as well as management of disease.

Key words: Upastambha, Ahara, Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana, Karana.

ABSTRACT

Health as well as diseases is dependent on various factors. According to Acharya Charak, the body is supported by three sub-pillars known as Tri Upstambha (Ahara, Nidra, and Brahmacarya). Ahara has been placed first in this statement, which shows that it is most important to maintain the life. Everyone desires a blanched diet. Ahara is responsible factor for human beings, in health and diseased state. Ahara is not only needed for the continuity of life, but also for Bala, Varna, Upacaya and longevity etc. In other medical sciences, food is considered important, but not the manner of eating and cooking. Ahara is a basic need for survival of life. For intake of Ahara, Ayurved has enlisted some special conditions which need to be followed to obtain complete benefits of the food. They are called as Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana. In which Karana is the processing of the substances which result in transformation of the inherent attributes in Dravya. In this article we will discuss the Samskara as a Karana among Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana for maintenance of healthy life as well as management of disease.

Key words: Upastambha, Ahara, Ashta Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana, Karana.
Kuttana, Peshana and Nishpidana. Samskara is the word used most frequently in Samhitakala for a variety of procedures; including Swedana, Mardana, Bhavana and Manthana among others. All references to Samskara in Rasasatra and Bhaisajya Kalapana point towards different methods of processing or preparation. In Charaka Samhita, after quoting the definition of Samskara from the earliest ayurvedic book, a list of many techniques helpful to creating Gunantaradhana is provided.[3]

AIM AND OBJECTIVES
To study the effect of Samskara Karma on Dravya.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
The Ayurvedic classics were analysed in detail regarding the references for Samskara and its effect on Dravya from Ayurvedic texts used in this study are Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, Tarka Sangraha and relevant articles.

DISCUSSION
Types
In Brihattrayi, Samskara’s direct types are not listed. Vaisesika Darsana provides a precise reference for types that can be understood from an Ayurvedic perspective.

Three types of Samskara are as follows in Tarka Sangraha[3]

1. Vegakhya Samskara
Situated in Prthvi, Apa, Teja, Vayu and Mind i.e., Prthvivyadi, Catustayamanovrtti.

2. Stthiti Sthapaka Samskara
The Guna responsible for gaining the previous Avastha, after Avastha has been changed by some external source. It is situated in Katadiprthvi i.e., Katadi Prthvi Vrtti. It is a Cause for Syandana.

3. Bhavnakhya Samskara
As an impression or impregnation on mind, causative factor for memory, situated in soul (Atma) i.e., Atmamatravrtti.

Then we let see the different processes mentioned in Charaka Samhita, which could also be considered as types of Samskara.

So, analyse the many procedures listed in the Charaka Samhita; which could also be considered as types of Samskara.[2]

a) Toya Sannikarsha
b) Agni Sannikarsha
c) Shouca
d) Manthana
e) Desha
f) Kala
g) Vasana
h) Bhavanadi (by Adi all processes namely Paka, Dhavana, Nimajjana, Avapana, Nirvapana, Patana, Soshana, Sincana, Sthapana, Mardana can be considered.)
i) Kala Prakarsha
j) Bhajana etc.

In this classification, it is important to note that, first preference is given to Toyaagni Sannikarsha. The cause can be understood by reviewing basic Siddhanta of Pancamahabhutas. At the level of Pancamahabhutas, Prthvi is an Adhara for all the processes of Samyoga-Vibhaga and Akasha is providing space for those remaining three Mahabhutas; namely Jala, Agni and Vayu are responsible for transformations or changes taking place in a substance.

In the process of evolution of Mahabhutas, sequence of evolution is.[4]

Akasha → Vayu → Agni → Jala → Prthvi

Here Agni Mahabhuta is having its place right in the middle, showing its significant role in the transformation of Mahabhutas. So, in any Pancabhautika substance also, continuous changes or transformations are taking place due to presence of Agni Mahabhuta in it. But the rate of transformation may differ according to quantity of Agni Mahabhuta present in it and other helpful conditions.
By providing *Agni* from outside, one can increase the rate of transformation. Therefore, *Agni Mahabhuta* plays a key role.

\[
\text{Agni} \quad \text{Murta} \rightarrow \text{Amurta} \\
\rightarrow \text{(Prithvi, Jala) (Akasha, Vayu)}
\]

When it comes to this transformation, *Vayu* and *Jala* are supporting or useful *Mahabhutas*. Transformation varies from *Samskara* in that it can occur in any way and result in any *Dravya*. However, *Samskara* is transforming in a proper manner by creating the necessary conditions in order to obtain the desired outcome.

As *Karana Karyavada* (cause and effect relationship) is a widely accepted *Siddanta* in *Ayurvedic* texts, *Karana* can change into any *Karya*. However, "*Samyak Karyotpatti*" refers to the process as *Samskara* when it is creatively carried out in a proper manner.

\[
\text{Transformation} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{Karya} \\
\text{Karana} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{Samyak Karya}
\]

Therefore, *Samskara* as a process can be broadly categorised under the following three headings.

1. *Toya Sannikarsha*
2. *Agni Sannikarsha*
3. *Toya Agni Sannikarsha*

### 1) Toya Sannikarsha

- In *Sauca* is cleansing with water, so it is considered under *Toya Sannikarsha*.

- In *Dhavana* instead of water, different medicated decoctions are also used, which are *Jala Mahabhuta* dominant, so considered under *Toya Sannikarsa*.

- In *Nimajjana*, a substance is placed in specific medium for specific time. According to *Pancamahabhuta Siddhanta*, to make changes in *Parthiva Dravya*, *Jala Mahabhuta* is required to soften the hardness present in *Parthiva Dravyas*. Also, *Jala Mahabhuta* penetrates into *Parthiva Dravya* and loosens the molecular bonding, thereby accumulating space present in between molecules. As the sequence of evolution is from *Akasha* to *Prithvi*, the sequence of dissolution is reversing i.e., *Prithvi*, *Jala*, *Agni*, *Vayu*, *Akasha*. So as the *Prithvi* gets dissolved into *Jala Mahabhuta*, *Jala Mahabhuta* dominant *Dravyas* are used in the above processes.

### 2) Agni Sannikarsha

- *Desha Samskara* implies putting specific *Dravya* (eg. *Asava, Arista* etc), in a specific place i.e., beneath *Bhasma Rashi, Dhanya Rashi* etc. Purpose of putting the *Dravya* in particular place is to maintain controlled temperature or heat pattern which is required for formation of end product. In this way, this can be included in *Agni Sannikarsha*.

- *Kala Prakarsha* implies putting a *Dravya* for specific time, required to enhance maximum potential of end product. Again, example given is *Asava Arista* etc. which are generally kept in a controlled temperature condition for nearly 15 days of time.

- *Mardana, Soshana, Paka* etc. can be clearly considered under *Agni Sannikarsha*, though the amount of *Agni* required for the above said processes is in the increasing order respectively. As *Mardanajanya Agni* is produced which is in less amount but for longer duration in process of *Mardana*; while in *Paka*, more amount of *Agni* is given directly, may be for shorter or longer duration as per requirement.

### 3) Toya Agni Sannikarsha

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3) **Toyaagnisannikarsha**

Maximum number of processes requires *Toya* and *Agni Sanikarsha*, both to carry out transformation.

- In *Manthana* process, Water is added to *Dadhi* and it is then churned by a Churner. In this process of churning also, a specific amount of *Agni* gets produced which is required to increase *Laghutva, Shothaghna* properties forming new product *Takra*.

- In *Nirvapana*, firstly the substance is heated (*Agnisanikarsha*) and then is dipped in specific decoctions, oil or *Kanji* etc. (*Toyasannikarsha*).

- In *Peshana* process can be considered under *Toyaagnisannikarsha*, as while doing *Peshana* with *Jala*, some amount of *Agni* is also produced due to friction.

- In *Svedana* process, clearly *Toyaagni Sannikarsa* is there.

Ashtanga Sangraha had given good contribution by mentioning Various examples of *Samskara* collected at one place i.e., in *Sutra Sthana*. Indu again has contributed well by classifying these examples under different headings which are as under:[5]

1. **Samskara Vishesha**
2. **Svabhava Vishesha**
3. **Samskara Svabhava**
4. **Avastha Vishesha**
5. **Patra Vishesha**
6. **Kriya Vishesha**
7. **Kriya Svabhava Vishesha**
8. **Kriya Prayoga Vishesha**
9. **Kriya Samyoga Vishesha**
10. **Samyoga Samskara Vishesha**
11. **Samskara Kala Vishesha**

1) **Samskara Vishesha**

(a) **Adraka** → *Sunthi*  
(Toyaagnisannikarsa)

Here *Adraka* before and after dipping in lime water dried in sunlight. So, *Jala Mahabhuta* dominance gets decreased and *Agni Mahabhuta* dominance increased comparatively, so that *Adraka* having *Guru Guna* is converted into *Sunthi* having *Laghu Guna*.

(b) **Saktu → Siddha Pindika** (*Toyaagnisannikarsa*)

Here *Saktu* is *Svabhava laghu*, but when *Pindika* is made from it, it becomes *guru*.

(c) **Vrihi → Laja**

Here *Vrihi* which is *Guru* and *Pittakara*, after *Samskara* becomes *Laghu* and *Pittahara*.

(d) **Mudga  →  Kulmasha** (*Toyaagni Sannikarsha*)

Here *Mudga* which is *Laghu* and *Samgrahaka* by nature is transformed to *Kulmasha*, which are *Guru* and *Bhedi* after *Alpa Svedana*. Here also *Toyaagni Sannikarsha* is there. But *Alpa* word is indicative of *Agni Mahabhuta* used is less, as compared to *Jala Mahabhuta*. Also, *Vayu Mahabhuta* which is dominant in *Mudga* responsible for *Shoshana* activity in *Ama Takra* get decreased and *Agni Mahabhuta* is increased comparatively, due to *Agni Samskara*.

(e) **Aam Takra  →  Pakwa Takra** (*Agni Sannikarsha*)

Here also, *Ama Takra* which is *Ati Samgrahana* get converted into *Pakva Takra* after *Agni Samskara* which is *Kincita Samgrahanam*. Here, *Vayu Mahabhuta* responsible for *Shoshana* activity in *Ama Takra* get decreased and *Agni Mahabhuta* is increased comparatively, due to *Agni Samskara*.

(f) **Ama Mulakam  →  Pakwa Mulakam**

Here *Ama Mulaka* which is *Tridoshakara* becomes *Adoshala* after *Agni Samskara* on it.

(g) **Visha Nashaka Makshika  →  Vishibhavati**

This example showing how *Samskara* can be harmful, if not properly used in proper substance. Honey which is antitoxic by nature becomes toxic substance after *Agni Samskara* (If heated).
Thus, these are some of the examples of Samskara Vishesha.

2) Svabhava Vishesha

**Dadhi** → **Takra** and **Navaneeta**

Here Dadhi which is Snigdha and Shopakara, after Manthana Samskara forms 2 substances: Takra and Navaneeta. Both are Snigdha but not Shopakara. Here the reason given by Indu as Svabhava Vishesha. But the reason lies in Samskara only, as Manthana Samskara is done, some amount of Agni is produced in the process due to Manthana, which changes Abhisyandi and Guru Dadhi into Anabhisyandi and Laghu Takra.

3) Samskara Svabhava

Here Indu has given example of Samskarita and Asamskarita Takra. In diseases like Peenasa etc. Samskarita Takra is only useful, Asamskarita is not useful. Indu tells it as Samskara Svabhava. But it is not that much clear. According to Panchamahabutha Siddhanta, it can be said that Vayu Mahabhutha dominance responsible for Shita Sparsha in Takra gets reduced and Agni Mahabhutha dominance increased comparatively, after Agni Samskara which is useful in diseases like Peenasa, having Vata Dosha dominance.

4) Avastha Vishesha

**Ksheera** → **Dadhi Ghrita**

**Ajaata Dadhi → Takra**

(Kashayam - Grahi)

(Amla - Bhedan)

Here, Ksheera is forming different substances according to different Samskaras. i.e., Ksheera (Madhura, Sara, Seeta) is getting transformed into Dadhi (Amla, Grahi, Ushna) by Kala Samskara, having exactly different properties. Again, after Agni Samskara, it is getting converted into Ghee, which is Ksheera Sadrsam i.e., Madhura, Seeta, etc. Again, the by-product formed in the process is Takra, having different properties than Dadhi. So, here it is termed as Avastha Vishesha of the same substance as it is exhibiting different properties according to different Avastha.

5) Patra Vishesha

**Draksha** → **Kept in Lohapatra → Draksha**

(Madhura, Vatapittahara) (Amlatvam, Tridosakoram)

It is also important that Patra used for keeping Bhesahaja should be such that there should be enhancement of properties of Bhesahaja. The example mentioned above for Patra Visesa is indicative of this fact only. When Draksha is kept in Patra made up of iron, it induces mild chemical reaction, thereby increasing sourness and Tridosha Karyata in Draksha. As madhura Draksha is getting converted to Amla, it can be said that Prthvi and Jala mahabhutha dominance is getting changed to Prthvi and Agni mahabhutha dominance disturbing the natural Pancabhatika Sanghatana of Draksha making it Tridoshakara. In Caraka Samhita, it is termed as Bhajana Samskara.

6) Kriya Vishesha

**Sali** → **Peshava Samskara** → **Godhumat Api** → **Adhikam Gurutvam Yati**

Here, Sali which is Laghu by nature becomes more Guru than Svabhava Guru Godhumata after Peshana Samskara. After Peshana Samskara, Vayu Mahabhutha dominance gets reduced and Jala Mahabhutha dominance increases making it Guru.

7) Kriya Svabhava Vishesha

**Tila → Khal Taila**

Tila is Shlesmakara, but Khal Taila made up of Tila is Aslesmakara. This is due to Kriya Svabhava Vishesha. Here Prthvi dominance in Tila is getting reduced after making Khal Taila.

**Rakta Shali → Prthuka**

(Rakta Sali gets converted into Prthuka which is Guru. It is similar to Kriya Svabhavavishesha i.e., it is Svabhavavishesha of this Kriya (Process) which is responsible for this
transformation. Here also Vayu Mahabhuta dominance in Rakta Sali decreases and Prthvi and Jala Mahabhuta dominance increases in the process thereby making Prthukha Guru.

8) Kriya Prayoga Vishesha

Candana Lepa → Slaskna, Suska, Ghana - Dahakara
Aguru Lepa → Parusa, Ardra, Tanu - Seetakrta

Candana having Shitaveerya is showing Dahakara effect, if applied on the body in Shlakshna, Shushka, and Ghana form. Whereas, Aguru which is Ushna Virya, shows Shitakrita (Cooling) effect, if applied on the body in Parusha, Ardra and Tanu form. So, here Kriya Prayoga i.e., method of application is showing this difference. But this example is showing more relevance to Samyoga rather than Samskara.

9) Kriya Samyoga Vishesha

Guda + Dadhi = Rasala

After Samyoga of Dadhi and Guda (both Guru), the resultant formed Rasala is Atigurutara i.e., showing more grade of heaviness than expected. This is termed as Kriya Samyoga Vishesha by Indu.

10) Samyoga Samskara Vishesha

Guda + Toya = Panakam

This example is again showing the similarity with above example of Kriya Samyoga Vishesha. But Indu termed it as Samyoga Samskara Vishesha.

11) Samskara Kala Vishesha

Guda + Water = Madya
Guda + Water = Sukta

Dhataki, Guda and water when combined and kept together, it is Samskara and Kala that decides whether it will be Madya or Sukta. So, it is considered under Samskara Kala Vishesha by Indu.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is clear that Samskara is an important aspect of changes of attributes in any Dravya. Karya-Dravyas are constantly changing as a result of the presence of Agni Mahabhuta. Depending on the amount of Agni Mahabhuta present in a substance, the rate of transformation might be either slow or fast. In Samskara, the rate of transformation is simply increased up by the application of different techniques. For practical understanding, the word "Gunantaradadhana" has been used in Samskara. Because of the 'Samavaya' connection that exists between Karana-Dravya and Gunas, Gunantaradadhana indicates Dravyantradvahan. Bhumyadina Gunaihi is representative of the Mahabhutas’ Gunas. i.e., Karana Dravyas are only having the relationship of Samavaya. Samskara and Samyoga are very similar to one another. The quantity of the substances involved in the Samskara and Samyoga processes that creates the difference. Samskara and Samyoga are very similar to one another. The quantity of the substances involved in the Samskara and Samyoga processes that creates the difference in Samyoga, the substances are in dominant quantity. While in Samskara, Samskaraka Dravya is less in quantity. It is essential for Ayurvedists to fully understand the concept of Samskara and the fundamental ideas behind it given that understanding so can allow them to utilise a single drug in multiple ways as needed. As drug availability keeps decreasing daily, this knowledge is becoming more and more important. The other 3 Padas of Bhesaja - Bahuta, Yogyatva, and Sampat can all be increased or improved by Samskara, according to Ayurvedic medicine.

REFERENCES


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